

**2019/2020 FIA World Endurance Championship
Round 3: 4 Hours of Shanghai**

***Michelin's endurance racing tyres contribute to
entertaining 4 Hours of Shanghai***

Round 3 of the 2019/2020 FIA World Rally Championship was won by the N°1 Rebellion R13 of Bruno Senna/Gustavo Menezes/Norman Nato who started China's round of the FIA WEC from pole position after topping Saturday's qualifying on Michelin rubber. Second and third were the similarly Michelin-equipped N°8 and N°7 Toyota TS050 Hybrids in the hands of Mike Conway/Kamui Kobayashi/José María López and Sébastien Buemi/Kazuki Nakajima/Brendon Hartley respectively.

In contrast, the French firm's LMP2 partners were down on luck in Shanghai. The class's pole-winning N°42 ORECA 07-Gibson of Cool Racing, Lapierre/Borga/Coigny was halted by Race Control after suffering an electronics problem, while the N°22 United Autosports car of Hanson/Albuquerque/Di Resta lost power after debris got blocked in the air intake of its engine, eliminating it from the scrap for victory. Despite an unscheduled pit stop to cure the problem on Lap 8, it still completed the distance in third place – just 21 seconds short of the winner – to showcase the potential of its Michelin rubber both in qualifying and on race day.


The LMGTE Pro class was topped by the N°92 Porsche 911 RSR of Christensen/Estre, ahead of Bruni/Lietz's N°91 sister car and Aston Martin Racing's N°97 Vantage AMR (Lynn/Martin). The LM GTE Am order was topped by the N°90 TF Sport-run Aston Martin Vantage AMR of Eastwood/Yoluc/Adam, ahead of the N°57 Porsche 911 RSR (PROJECT 1, Keating/Ten Voorde/Bleekemolen) and the Aston Martin Racing-tended N°98 Vantage AMR (Dalla Lana/Turner/Gunn). All six cars were equipped with Michelin tyres.

As was the case at the season's curtain raiser at Silverstone, Great Britain, the race's four-hour format (instead of six hours, as in 2018/2019) kept spectators entertained as the teams opted for a variety of different strategies.

The 5.451-kilometre Shanghai International Circuit is notoriously hard on tyres due in part to its layout which features a combination of short straights, slow turns and two fast sections which result in different aerodynamic constraints, with tyres having to adjust to the constantly changing downforce levels. The surface, meanwhile, is one of the most abrasive of the championship.

"The fact that today's race was shorter than last year's didn't make tyre strategies any easier, especially at a circuit like Shanghai," observed **Pierre Alvens**, the manager of Michelin's endurance racing programmes. "The track's layout, its abrasive surface and the obligation to double stint the same tyres in every class except GTE AM led certain teams to adjust their game plans for the weekend and revise their strategy for qualifying. At the same time, the mild weather allowed us to collect some valuable data for the races to come. Regulations like the Success Handicap, which seeks to make races closer, and the switch to a four-hour format were positive changes for the spectacle and tyres ended up playing an even more important role."





For the 2019 4 Hours of Shanghai, Michelin provided its LMP1, LMP2 and GTE PRO partners with a choice between hard- and medium-compound tyres. In LM GTE Am, where the regulations allow tyres to be changed after every stint, the teams chose either medium and soft, or hard and medium slicks. Wets and Full Wets were also on hand to cover the eventuality of wet weather, as was the MICHELIN Hybrid slick which the LM P1 prototypes can fit in damp or drying conditions. As it turned out, the weather stayed clear throughout, with sunny intervals and temperatures up to 23°C meaning only dry-weather tyres were used on race day.

The next round of the 2019/2020 FIA World Endurance Championship will take teams to Sakhir for the 8 Hours of Bahrain on December 14.

